



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
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December 23, 2015

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: *Robin Kay, Ph.D.*
Robin Kay, Ph.D.
Acting Director

SUBJECT: **NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO ENTER INTO A SOLE SOURCE
CONTRACT NEGOTIATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA**

This memo is to comply with the Board of Supervisors Policy Manual, Section 5.100, Sole Source Contracts regarding contracting policy requirements for sole source agreements. It is the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's (DMH) intent to enter into a new sole source agreement with the University of Southern California (USC) for a period of 18 months for the provision of Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) services via telehealth for Transition Age Youth (TAY) and their families referred by the Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK), HUB Clinic, or one of the other medical hubs, after coming to the attention of the Child Welfare System.

On June 25, 2013, in response to a child fatality, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion for the Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) to address issues of child safety. Beginning in August 2013 the BRC held 17 meetings and published its Final Report on April 2014. The BRC issued a set of recommendations, including articulating a countywide mission to prioritize and improve child safety. On July 28, 2015, following consultation with Supervisorial District 2 and senior leadership at DMH, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and Department of Health Services (DHS), USC submitted a project proposal to DMH to provide innovative telemental health PEI services to youth who come to the attention of the Child Welfare System but remain with their families of origin.

The USC Telehealth program is a large-scale, completely virtual behavioral health clinic operated under USC's School of Social Work. Over the past three years, USC Telehealth has served over 1,500 highly diverse, online therapy clients in their homes or other private locations. The clinic is staffed with experienced Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) and trained/supervised Masters of Social Work (MSW) student interns. The clinic complies with federal and State law pertaining to the practice of telemedicine, now more broadly identified as telehealth. The program will be delivered by USC students using the Seeking Safety (SS) and Crisis Oriented Recovery Services

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(CORS) Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) models. Potential program participants will be identified by the co-located DMH social workers assigned to the MLK HUB or other medical hubs, and referred to USC to determine child's eligibility.

USC is a unique provider that brings a combination of experience and expertise in evidence-based mental health care, research/program evaluation, technology, and child welfare, coupled with philanthropic financial support for the proposed partnership with DMH. In particular, in order to increase access to mental health services, USC's Telehealth program, using its own funding, will provide an iPad to each client that does not have access to a home computer. This telehealth program will be the first and only completely virtual, home based mental health service program for youth at risk of being detained by DCFS. This program will be the first and only completely mobile virtual mental health service program for youth at risk of being detained by DCFS.

The USC Telehealth program includes LCSW and MSW interns capable of providing mental health services in English and Spanish, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The project aligns with the BRC's recommendations for mental health and a countywide safety system to support "access to and delivery of critical mental health services" and ensure that "mental health treatment for teens and transitioning youth incorporate trauma-focused assessment and interventions, appropriate to the developmental status, ethnicity, sexual identity, and risk factors of the youth being served."

DMH will work closely with both the Office of County Counsel and the Chief Executive Office in negotiating an agreement with USC.

If you have any questions, please contact Bryan Mershon, Deputy Director of Children's Systems of Care, at (213) 738-2147.

RK:BM:RB:sk

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
 Chief Executive Office
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